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January/February 2015

American Girl

americangirlmagazine.com



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decorating projects

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Volume 23, Number 1

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Safety first!

Some of our projects and activities require an adult's help.
When you see this symbol, be sure to ask an adult to work with you.

Cover photo: Steven Talley

Girls EXPRESS®

Warm Wishes

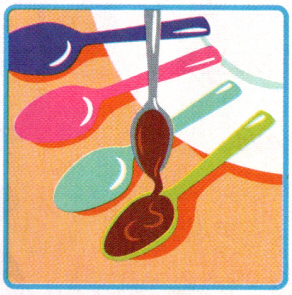
Stir up a tasty treat with these sweet spoons.



1. Arrange four colorful plastic spoons with the handles balanced on the edge of a plate. (This keeps the spoons level.)



2. Ask an adult to microwave ⅓ cup chocolate or white chocolate chips in short bursts until melted.



3. Use a small spoon to drizzle melted chocolate into each spoon.



4. Decorate with colored sugar or small candies. Let cool.



Stir one spoon into a small mug of warm milk until melted.

Meet an AG Reader



Madison B.
Age 12, Florida

In my free time, I like to paint, draw—really, anything creative. I also like to play outside, ride my bike, play with my dog, and read magazines.

My favorite snack: I love strawberries. I know that's kind of plain, but they are GOOD.

My proudest day: That was the day I played the lead in a musical. I memorized 135 lines in two weeks!

One thing people would never guess about me: I hate wearing stage makeup.

A time I wanted to disappear: While I was grabbing a napkin in the cafeteria at school, I knocked into a table that had this huge water dispenser on it. The whole water thing came crashing down. It made a super loud noise, and everyone stared at me. I felt SO embarrassed.

My favorite part of AG magazine is the quizzes. I just love testing myself and seeing my score.

Introduce Yourself!

To find out how to be a featured reader, go to americangirlmagazine.com/playmagazine

Photos: Radlund Photography Illustrations: Tracey Wood

AG Art Gallery

Who takes pictures of the cutest, snowiest dogs? Our readers do!

Help us fill our gallery! Send color copies of your **original artwork** or **photos** to the address on page 7. Sorry, we can't return entries.



Georgia

Faith H.
Age 10, North Carolina



Jazz

Jordan P.
Age 11, Oregon



Ruby

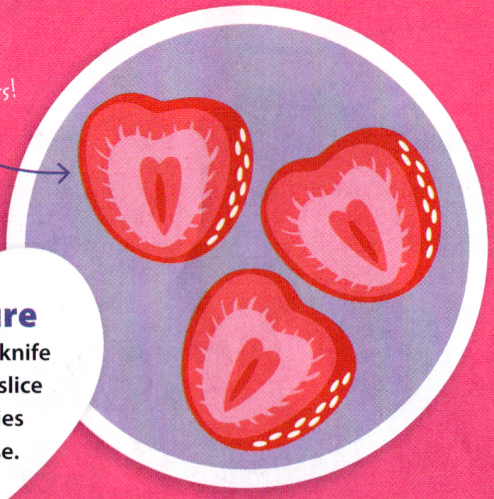


Ella N.
Age 12, Missouri

Fast Five

Have a ♥

Here are five fun heart things for Valentine's Day.



1. Nature

Use a butter knife to carefully slice strawberries lengthwise.

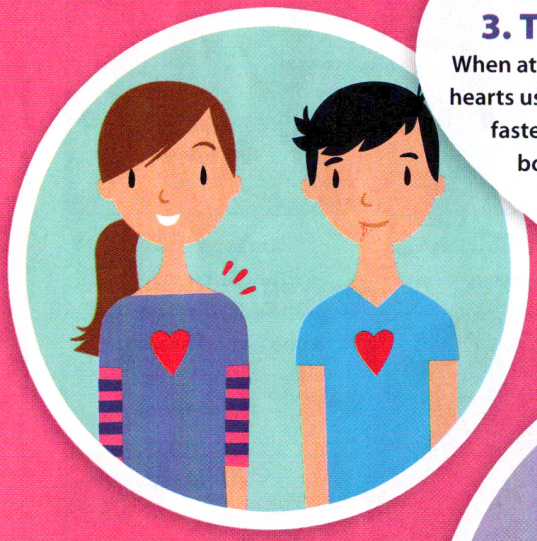


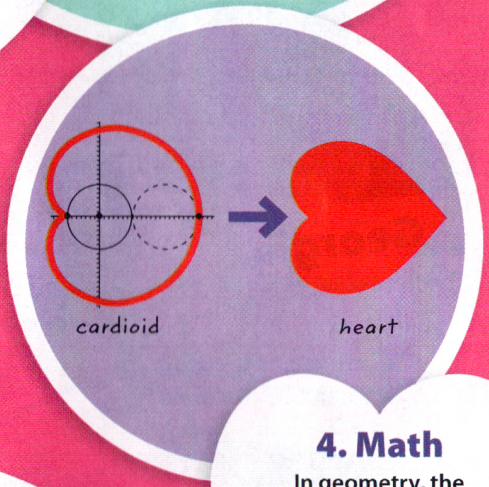
2. Doodles

Turn hearts into art!

3. Trivia

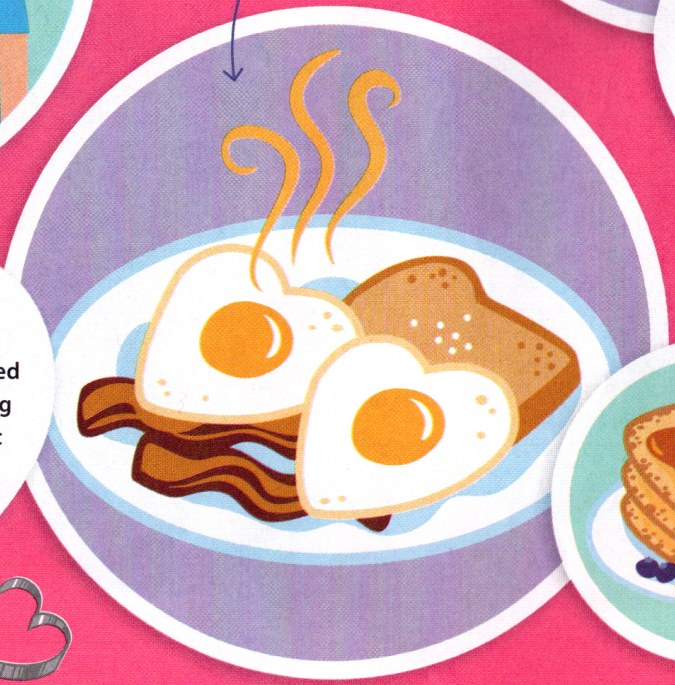
When at rest, girls' hearts usually beat faster than boys'.





4. Math

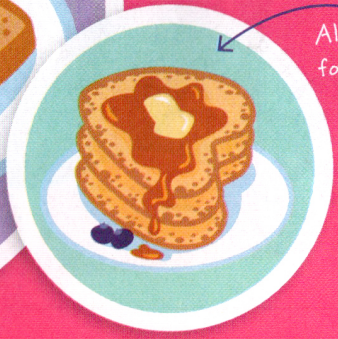
In geometry, the complicated curve called a *cardioid* is named after the Greek word for "heart."



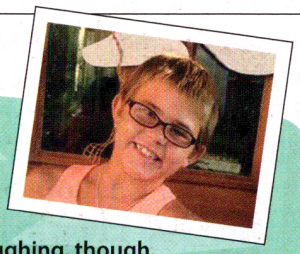
5. Breakfast

Spray a metal heart-shaped cookie cutter with cooking spray. Then have an adult place it in a pan before cooking an egg inside it.





Shining Star



When Kamryn R. noticed her friend Delaney's hair falling out after her chemotherapy treatment for cancer, Kamryn wanted to do something to help. "Delaney told me she didn't like being the only one without hair," Kamryn says. "She didn't like being stared at." So Kamryn, age nine, decided to go bald, too.

It felt shocking to have her shoulder-length hair shaved off, but the determined girl wouldn't let her friend feel alone. "I didn't know what I would look like," says Kamryn. "But Delaney was so happy when she saw my bald head. I was happy, too. She laughed and hugged me."

Kamryn's school in Colorado wasn't laughing, though. It has a strict dress-code policy and did not allow shaved heads at school, so Kamryn wasn't allowed to attend. But after two days, the school changed its decision for Kamryn's good-hearted act.

Kamryn shaved her head three more times in support of her friend. "I knew shaving my head was the right thing to do," she says. "My heart told me so."

You can shine, too. Any friend who is sick or going through a hard time might start to feel left out, uncomfortable, or alone. Be sure to include her as often as possible, both at school and away from school.

Write Now

Even non-writers can enter our new story contest!

Writing Checklist

For your story idea:

- ☐ Write only the first few paragraphs of a story or a very good idea for a story.
- ☐ Create original characters.
- ☐ Begin a creative plot.

Mailing Checklist

Include with your story:

- ☐ Your first and last name
- ☐ Address
- ☐ Phone number
- ☐ School photo or similar portrait
- ☐ Your birth date

We'll select a story idea, and the winner will work with one of our authors to finish it!

The winner will appear in the **November/December 2015** issue. You'll hear from us if you win. Have fun!



AG Poll

Answer these questions, and then turn the page to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

In history class, which topic would excite you most?

- * Kings and queens
- * How people used to live
- Scientific discoveries
- * Works of art

Which stuffed animal would you love the most?

- * A bear
- A cat
- * A dog
- * A bunny

If you were being bullied, what's the first thing you'd do?

- * Talk to an adult.
- Ask your friends for support.
- * Ignore the person.
- * Stand up for yourself.

AG Poll

What girls told us online



In history, you'd prefer to study

49% how people used to live.

22% works of art.

18% kings and queens.

11% scientific discoveries.

The stuffed animal you'd love the most is a



40% dog.

27% bunny.

20% bear.

13% cat.

If you were being bullied, the first thing you'd do is



53% stand up for yourself.

25% talk to an adult.

17% ignore the person.

5% ask your friends for support.

To answer our weekly poll question, go to americangirl.com/playmagazine

True Story

Eleanor's mom saves wolves—and Eleanor gets to hang out with them!

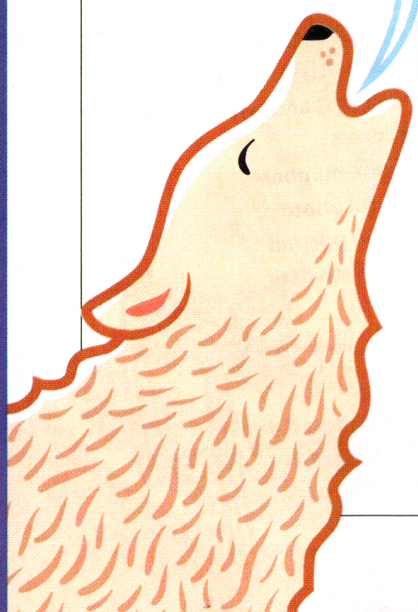
Dear American Girl,

I grew up around wolves, and I've always loved them. My mom works at a wolf conservation center. She helps save endangered wolves. One of my favorite wolves at the center is a pup named Nikai. He's brownish and yellowish. He does silly things, and he loves to chew stuff. When I touch him, he feels soft and sheddy.

The wolves at the center are like my brothers and sisters. They have taught me a lot, like how to howl. I'm a good howler—aroooooo! When I howl at the wolves, they always howl back. I don't know what they're saying, but it makes me happy. I like to watch them play and hide and even eat.

Some people think wolves are scary. But most wolves are actually scared of people. Wild wolves eat deer, and when they do that, they save trees. (Deer hurt trees by eating them or rubbing off the bark.) Trees give other animals homes and give us oxygen. That's another thing wolves have taught me, about nature. Nature is important, and that includes wolves.

Sincerely,
Eleanor W.
Age 7, New York





Mini Quiz

Gift-tacular!

Which Valentine's Day gift is most like your personality? Take our quiz to find out.

1. Your favorite book is
- **a.** an intriguing mystery.
- **b.** a thrilling adventure.
- **c.** a touching novel.

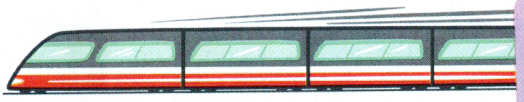
a, b, c, all of the above

2. Your favorite sea creature is
- **a.** a hermit crab.
- **b.** a jellyfish.
- **c.** a manatee.

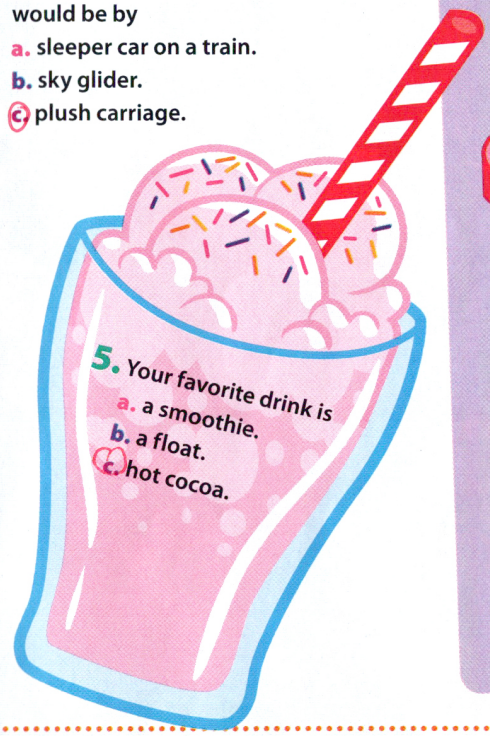


3. Your favorite thing to do outside is
- **a.** play hide-and-seek.
- **b.** blow dandelions.
- **c.** gaze at the clouds.





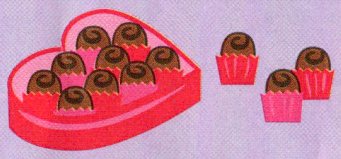
4. Your favorite way to travel would be by
- **a.** sleeper car on a train.
- **b.** sky glider.
- **c.** plush carriage.



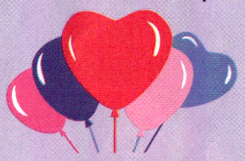
5. Your favorite drink is
- **a.** a smoothie.
- **b.** a float.
- **c.** hot cocoa.

Answers

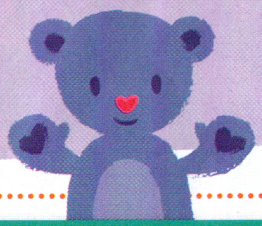
Mostly a's
You're a box of chocolates!



Mostly b's
You're a balloon bouquet!



Mostly c's
You're a teddy bear!



Write to Us

Be sure to include your
- First and last name
- Address and phone number
- Birth date, including year
- School photo or other portrait
- Parent's signature

Send us a cool envelope! Print our address neatly on the front and your return address on the back.

We can't print every letter, but we read everything you send to us. Hope to hear from you soon! ★





Envelope art by
Sammy T.
Age 10, Washington

Unique Universe

We are over the moon about the cool cosmos you created!

Cheeseburger in Outer Space



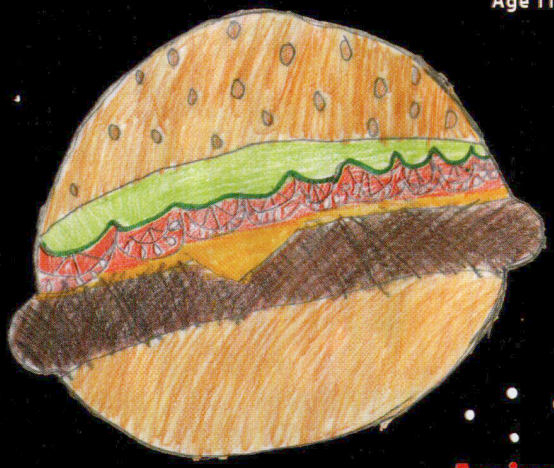
Olivia T.
Age 12, Colorado

Heavenly High Top



Zoie O.
Age 11, Arkansas









Animal-topia



Ashley L.
Age 11, Missouri



Frupiter



Emma B.
Age 12, Vermont



Cosmic Canine



Anupa V.
Age 10, California

Moon and Sun Fun



Elena D.
Age 10, New York

Extraterrestrial Treats



Rebecca K.
Age 10, Michigan

Musical Meteor



Landry C.
Age 12, Texas

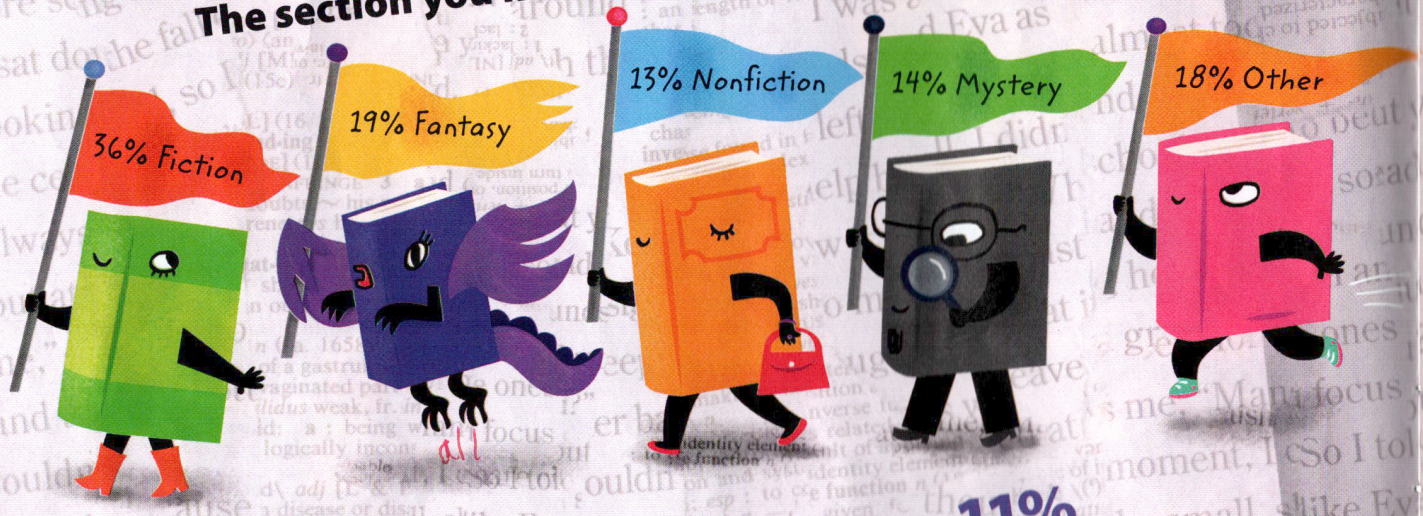
New Contest: Theme-Park Attractions

Can you imagine a sea creature theme park? A dolphin merry-go-round, a Loch Ness monster roller coaster, a squirt gun crab race? Design an attraction for this theme park and follow the instructions on page 7 to send us your one-of-a-kind drawing. Postmark deadline: February 10, 2015. Winners will appear in the July/August 2015 issue. Sorry—we can't return entries.

Illustrations: Lauren Scheuer

Books

The section you head to first in a library is



89% Fun



11% School



Are you more likely to read for school or for fun?

Your favorite reading spot is a corner in your room!

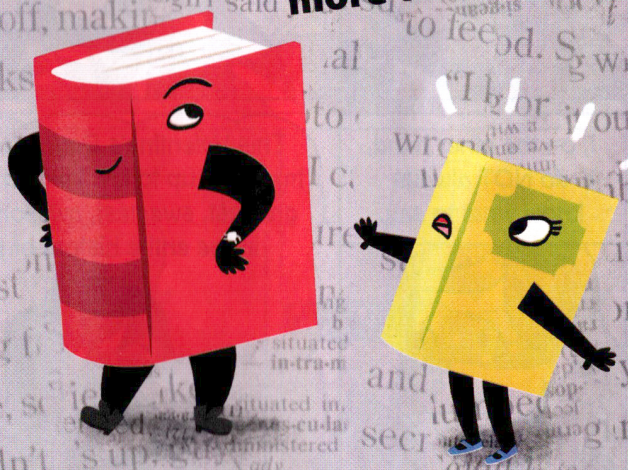


The name of your autobiography would be . . .



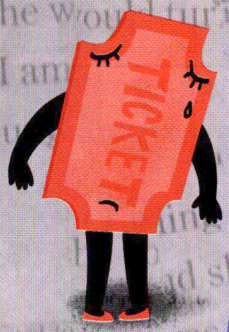
- Dancer at Heart
- If the Tiara Fits
- Cupcakes and Comic Books
- Strawberry in a Bowl of Oranges
- My Life as a Jedi in the 21st Century
- Life Is a Chocolate Doughnut

2/3 of you have read a book more than **500** pages long!





75% of you would rather read the book, and **25%** of you would rather see the movie!



Coming Up: Pool

1. What's your favorite thing to do at the pool?
   a. Swim laps
   b. Play games in the water
   c. Dive for objects at the bottom of the pool
   d. Play water basketball
   e. Jump off the diving board

2. What's your favorite swimming stroke?
   a. butterfly
   b. freestyle
   c. breaststroke
   d. backstroke

3. When you're not in the pool you can be found . . .
   a. lounging in the sun.
   b. playing games with your friends.
   c. having a snack.
   d. taking a nap.
   e. making towel forts.

4. Do you know how to do a front dive?
   yes OR no

5. When you go to the pool, what's more essential?
   goggles OR sunglasses

6. Describe your dream beach towel.

Send your answers to the address on page 7, along with your first and last name, address, school or portrait-style photo, and birth date. Postmark deadline: February 10, 2015. Some answers will appear in the July/August 2015 issue. ★

According to Aggie®

Heart Smarts

illustrated by Genevieve Kote

My friend Liv is one of those super thoughtful people. She remembers the names of people's pets.

How's Momo?

She takes care of people.

Hey, I grabbed the last pickles for you!

And she always knows EXACTLY what to say.

Maybe she's sad about something else and is taking it out on you?

She's really great at Valentine's Day, too. She calls it Friendship Day, and her handwritten cards are SWEET.

I, on the other hand, do NOT always know what to say.

This Valentine's Day, I decided to try to live up to Liv. I would make the greatest, sweetest, awesomest card in the entire history of paper.

Liv

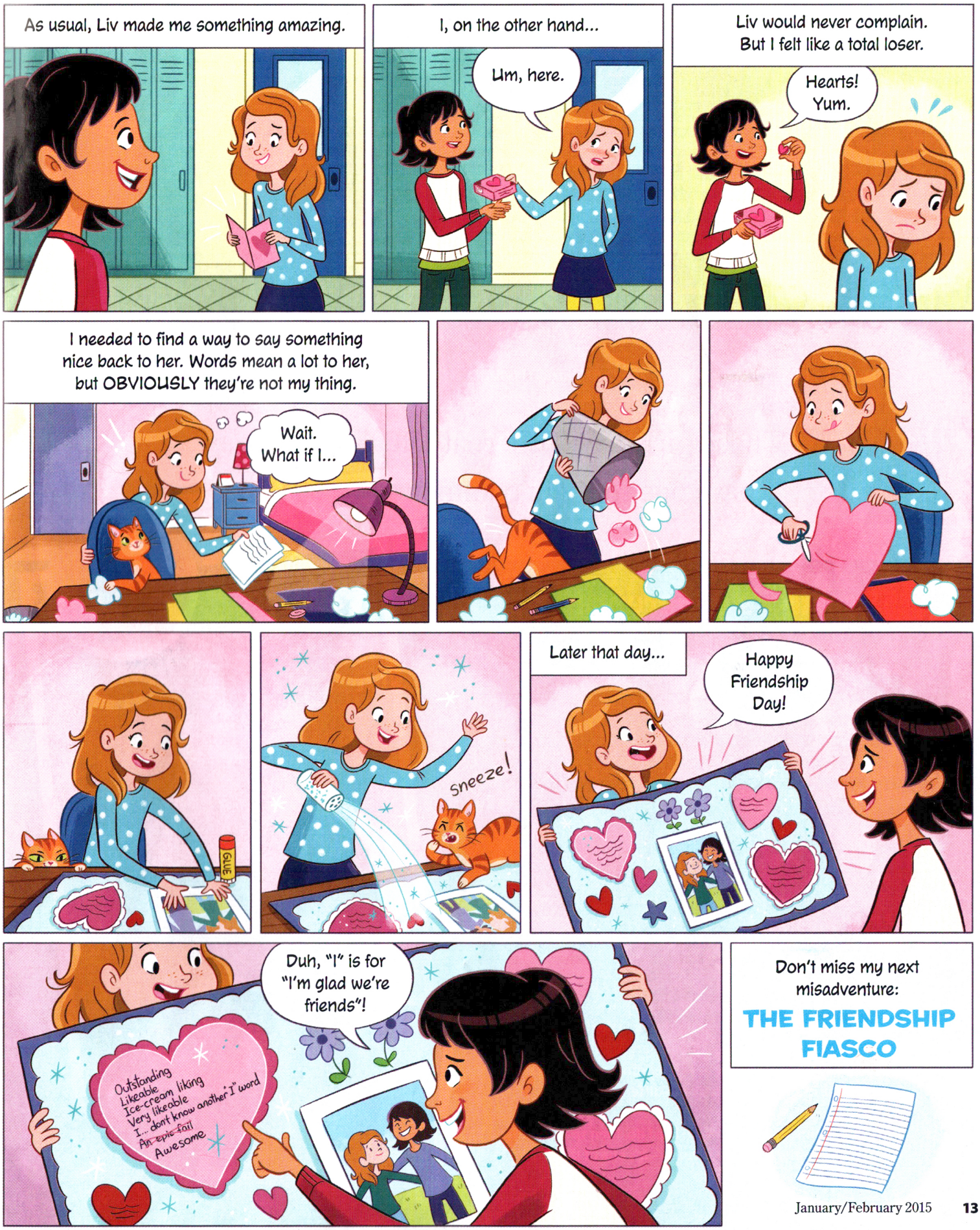
Easy, right?

Riiight.

I love my friend Olivia
She always knows some trivia
We could find a boat in Bolivia
And sail down the riv-ia

Outstanding
Likeable
Ice-cream liking
Very likeable
I... don't know another "I" word
An epic fail

It was not going well. And tomorrow was Valentine's Day.


As usual, Liv made me something amazing.
I, on the other hand...
Um, here.
Liv would never complain. But I felt like a total loser.
Hearts! Yum.
I needed to find a way to say something nice back to her. Words mean a lot to her, but OBVIOUSLY they're not my thing.
Wait. What if I...
GLUE
sneeze!
Later that day...
Happy Friendship Day!
Duh, "I" is for "I'm glad we're friends"!
Outstanding
Likeable
Ice-cream liking
Very likeable
I.. don't know another "I" word
An epic fail
Awesome
Don't miss my next misadventure:
THE FRIENDSHIP FIASCO

I Really Love...

These girls have different interests, but they have one thing in common—**passion!**

...making a difference.

Hannah A.
Age 11, Ontario

I'm passionate about a lot of things, especially animals and saving our environment. I don't believe a kid is ever too young to make a difference in the world. Three years ago my dog, Indigo, gave me an idea (I call her my "spark"). I wanted to help the environment for her and for us humans, too.

I started a blog to spread the word about how to be more eco-friendly at home, at school, and in our communities. I want to motivate kids so that we can all work together and help save our environment. Like this trail near my house, for instance. It's so beautiful. But when people litter, it's not beautiful anymore. I want people to pick up that garbage.

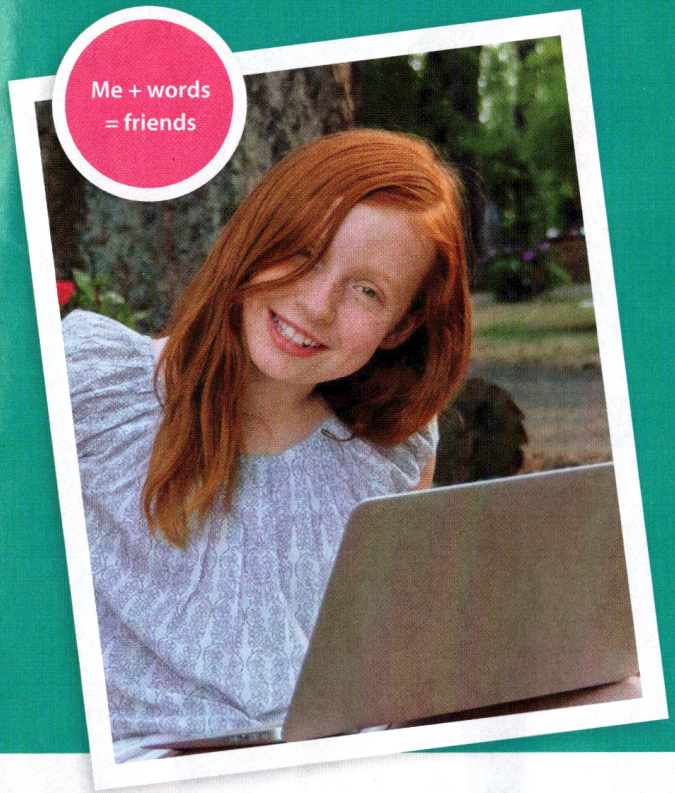
In the years I've been blogging, I've learned a lot about writing. I've also learned about how to motivate people. It's such a good feeling. My motto is that little things add up to make a huge difference. If one person collects one bag of litter, donates money to an environmental group, or reads one of my blogs, it makes a difference.

If you love animals and our world like I do, then speak out for the environment. Use your voice—it's one of the most powerful things you have.



Taking care of the earth makes me feel great.

Me and Indigo



...writing.

Rena M.

Age 10, Oregon

I love creating stories—there are so many in my head. Last year, I wrote an adventure novel. It's about a group of fifth-grade girls who travel the universe battling mythological creatures. I got the idea from a game I used to play with my friends.

Writing expands my imagination. It gives me the freedom to believe in new things, like totally new monsters or people and places with names that nobody's ever heard.

After I finished the book, my family had it published. It made me feel great to see it in my school library. Now I'm working on my second book. I'm also cowriting a book with a friend. Working with my friend makes the process even better. It's relaxing and fun and exciting, all at the same time.

...quilting.

Kailan B.

Age 10, California

When I was four years old, my mom and my aunty taught me to sew. I made bright-colored quilts in patches of blue, green, pink, and yellow. First I picked the fabrics, and then I cut out the pieces and made a pattern. Sewing it all together is always my favorite part. Finishing a quilt makes me happy.





...performing.

Storey L.
Age 11, New York

Since I was three years old, I have performed onstage with my parents. We make music for children. We get excitement and energy from the audience and then give it back to them in our songs. I love watching kids dance to our music. Sometimes they get really wild!

When I first started performing, I played the harmonica and sang. Now I also play the ukulele and recorders, and I shake the shakers. Sometimes I play this thing called a *melodica*. It's like a mini piano that you blow into.

On a typical Saturday, I'm up by 6:30 getting ready for a performance. We're out the door before 8:00 a.m. to do a sound check. (That's when we make sure the microphones sound OK.) Then we have breakfast and change into our show clothes. Backstage, we sing a song together to warm up. Then it's show time! We perform in some of the prettiest places, such as outdoors in national parks and in nice theaters.

Performing all these years has given me courage. I still get nervous. But I go onstage anyway, and I am always glad I did. After each show, we take pictures with the adorable fans. Sometimes they give me funny gifts and say the nicest things. It makes me happy when I hear that we have inspired them to make music with their own families.





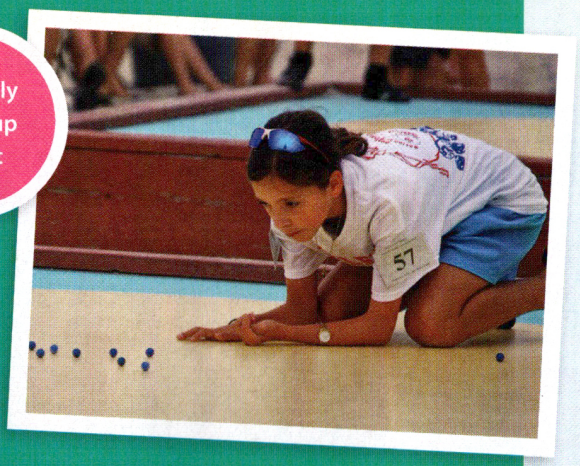
...playing basketball.

Jaden N.
Age 10, Florida

Swish! I love the way it sounds when I make a basket. I've been playing basketball since I was three. I love it so much. My mom and dad taught me how to play. My older brother, Julian, also plays. We play as a family—two on two. It's fun.

I play point guard on a high school basketball team, even though I'm only in fifth grade. I'm small, but I'm quick. I practice a lot, and I'm a hard worker. Even though I'm a lot younger than my teammates (and shorter, at just 4 feet, 7 inches), we are like sisters.

For me, basketball is all about family. My dad coaches the team. My mom and my brother cheer me on at all of my games, just as we cheer him on at his games. I can't imagine life without basketball.



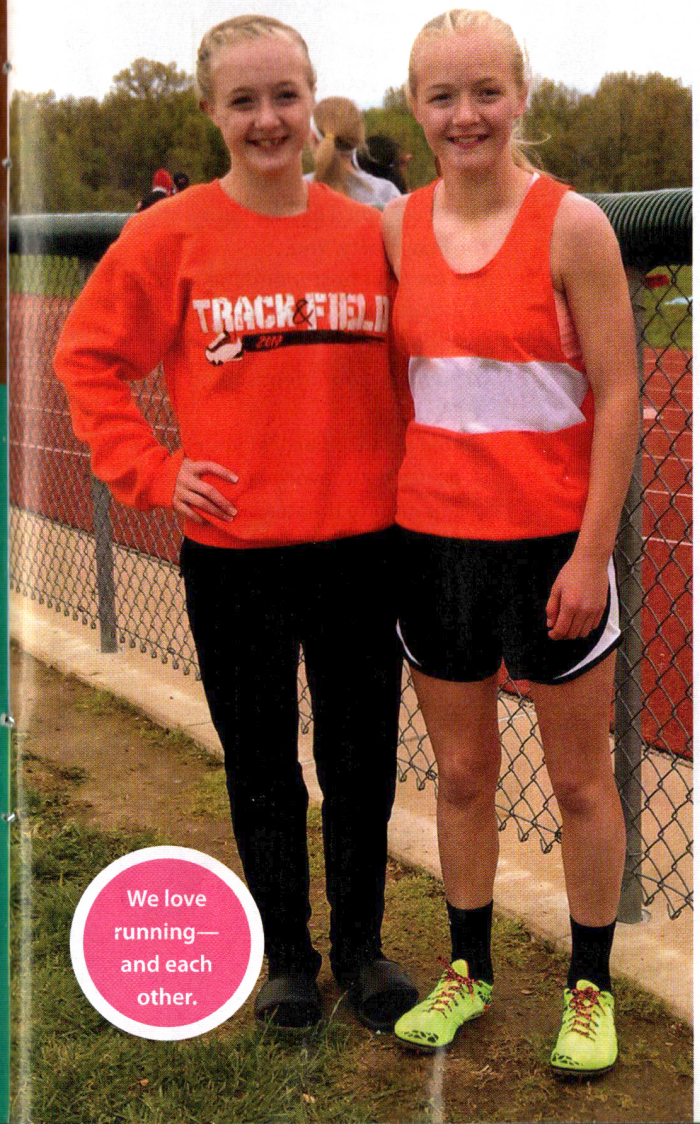
Carefully lining up a shot

...marbles.

Marilyn F.
Age 14, Maryland

I love the challenge of playing marbles. It takes a lot of coordination, concentration, and precision. Last summer, I won a national championship. The intensity of playing against super-good, super-serious players taught me to stay calm under pressure. My grandma taught me how to play. When I'm playing marbles—especially with my friends—I always have fun.





We love running—and each other.

...my sister.

Chloe G.
Age 14, Illinois

My sister, Claire, and I love to run track. Once at a state track meet, we were both running in the same race. I felt something pop in my thigh, but I kept going. On the next lap, I fell.

I was sitting on the track when my sister came up behind me. I figured she would finish on her own. But instead she bent down. She didn't say anything, but I knew what she meant, so I climbed onto her back. At first I was surprised she did that, but it made sense that she wouldn't leave me behind.

My sister does a lot of things for me, mostly things that people don't see. I kept asking Claire if she was OK, but she carried me almost a full lap—all the way to the finish line. That's how it works with my sister and me. We always have someone to count on.

Claire G.
Age 14, Illinois

The thing about having a twin sister is that I can tell Chloe anything—any day, any minute—and she gets it. We're together a lot. We fight, we laugh, and we take selfies. Chloe has a way of making people feel good. She picks everybody up with her great attitude.

But that day on the track when she fell, I picked her up. I didn't want her to not finish the race, so I carried her, just like I used to when we were little. It didn't seem like a big deal to me, even though I was really tired from an earlier race. Everyone was whistling and cheering when we went by. That kept me going. We made it across the finish line the same way we do most things: together. ★

Quiz

Cute Castles

What type of castle matches your personality?

1. When you get a new notebook for school, the first thing you do is...

a. add a silly sticker to each page so you will smile whenever you do your homework.



b. tape photographs of places you'd like to travel to the cover.

c. decorate the cover with different kinds of paper and ribbon.

d. write your favorite inspirational quote on the front in perfect cursive.

2. You lost Jazzie, the neighbor's puppy. You...

a. run around and bark like a dog hoping Jazzie will bark back.

b. jump on your bike and search the neighborhood for her.

c. grab your sketchbook and draw a detailed picture of her to put up around town.

d. wait on the steps with a bowl of food, and hope that she will come back soon.

3. Your dream vacation would be...

a. a cruise with your family—water, music, and fun in the sun.

b. camping in the mountains—fresh air and adventure.

c. a relaxing trip to the beach—the perfect scene to paint.

d. a trip to New York City—plenty of action and excitement.

4. Your favorite kind of movie is...

a. a comedy with quirky characters.

b. a scary one that keeps you on your toes.

c. a dramatic one that pulls at your heartstrings.

d. an exciting one where the main character goes after her dream.

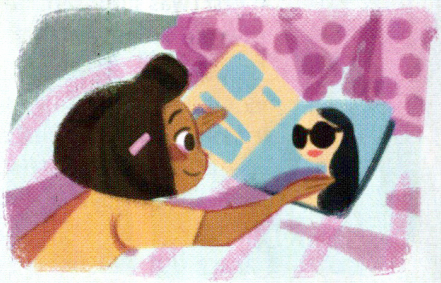
5. On the weekends you'd love to...

a. play capture the flag with friends at the park.

b. go to a rock-climbing gym.

c. sell photos you took at your school art fair.

d. read celebrity interviews when you're snuggled in bed.



6. Your parents say that you can redecorate your room. You...



a. put up posters of animals making funny faces.

b. go with a bold color scheme.

c. paint a huge mural on one of your walls.

d. pick out a dreamy canopy to hang over your bed.

7. Your friend suggests that you try out for the school talent show. You would wish to...

a. do a hilarious mime routine.

b. perform a trapeze routine you created.



c. invent a new instrument and play it.

d. belt out your favorite song and hope you're discovered.

8. Your mom says you can do whatever you'd like for your birthday party. You...

a. have your best friends sleep over and play kooky board games all night long.

b. invite all your friends to go play laser tag.

c. hold a dance party at your house.

d. go see your favorite play at the community theater.

9. Your future dream job would be...

a. a comedian—you love making people laugh.

b. an environmental scientist—you love exploring and learning more about our planet.

c. an artist—you love sharing your creativity with the world.

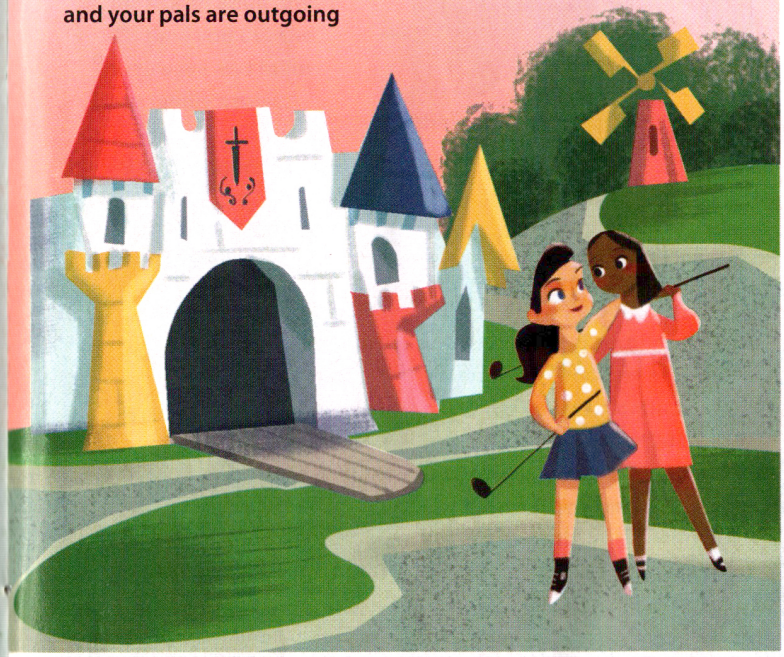
d. an actress—you love pretending to be someone different for a little while.



Answers

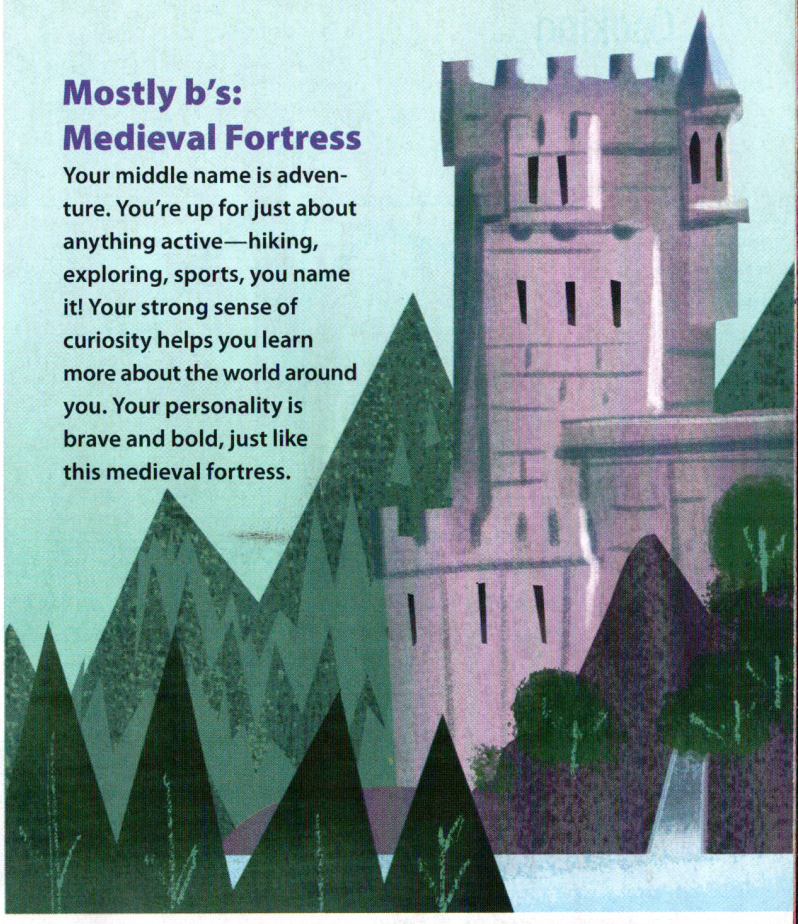
Mostly a's: Mini Golf Mansion

You're always making your friends giggle and coming up with fun activities to do. You and your pals are outgoing and love to be silly. Your colorful personality mirrors this mini golf castle. Goof on!



Mostly b's: Medieval Fortress

Your middle name is adventure. You're up for just about anything active—hiking, exploring, sports, you name it! Your strong sense of curiosity helps you learn more about the world around you. Your personality is brave and bold, just like this medieval fortress.



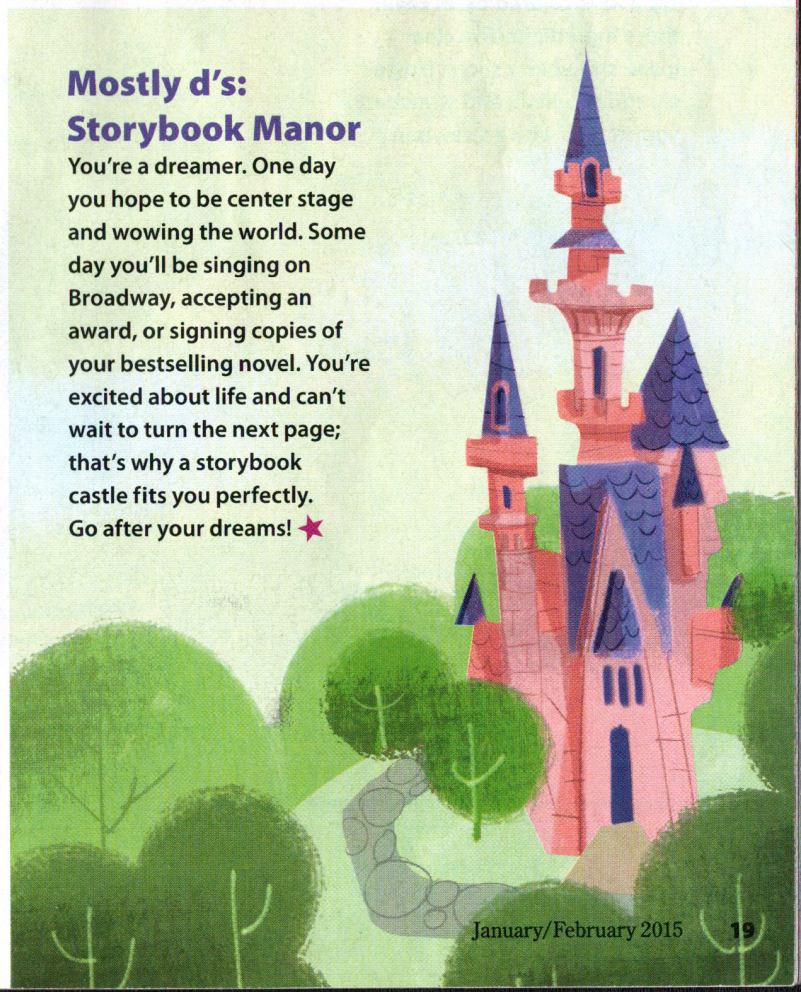
Mostly c's: Sandy Palace

Creativity is a big part of who you are. You believe that there's potential in just about everything. Whether it's a blank canvas or a blank wall, you're up to the challenge. You love to build and create new things, and that's why a sand castle is perfect for you.



Mostly d's: Storybook Manor

You're a dreamer. One day you hope to be center stage and wowing the world. Some day you'll be singing on Broadway, accepting an award, or signing copies of your bestselling novel. You're excited about life and can't wait to turn the next page; that's why a storybook castle fits you perfectly. Go after your dreams! ★



Illustrations: Victoria Ling

Pretty & Pink

These sweets are for sharing on Valentine's Day—or any day!

Pink Parfait

Try a rose-colored treat! Layer these ingredients in a clear glass: strawberry slices, frosted shredded wheat, and strawberry yogurt. Top with a strawberry!



Coral Crispies

This delicious dessert looks like cereal treats but tastes like cake!

YOU WILL NEED

Ask an adult any time you use the microwave and follow your family's rules.

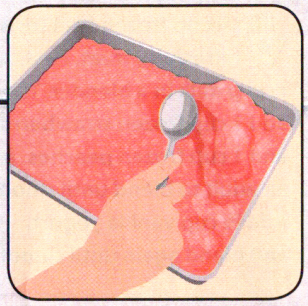
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 (10.5 oz) bag mini marshmallows
- ¼ cup dry red velvet cake mix (sifted)
- 6 cups crisp rice cereal



1. Heat butter in a large microwavable bowl on high for 30 seconds or until melted. Stir in marshmallows. Continue heating mixture for 20 seconds at a time, stirring in between, until smooth.



2. Add cake mix to the marshmallow mixture, and stir until thoroughly blended. Then add crisp rice cereal, and stir until evenly coated.



3. Spread the mixture in a buttered 9-by-13-inch pan using the back of a spoon. Let cool before serving.



Strawberry Smoothie

Mix up frozen fruit for a refreshing treat. First, pour ½ cup milk in a blender. Then add 1 cup frozen strawberries and 1 cup frozen peaches. Ask an adult to blend until smooth. Add ½ cup vanilla yogurt, and blend again until smooth.

Fuchsia Float

Drink pink! Place 3 or 4 frozen strawberries or raspberries in the bottom of a glass. Pour ½ cup berry juice (any pink fruit juice will do) into the glass. Add a scoop of vanilla ice cream; then pour ½ cup lemon-lime soda over it. Top with sprinkles.



Carnation Cookies

Here's one way to make a sleepover sweet.

YOU WILL NEED

- ½ cup butter
- 1¼ cup powdered sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 cups flour
- Pink or red liquid food coloring
- Pink sugar
- Chocolate striped candies (unwrapped and chilled in freezer)



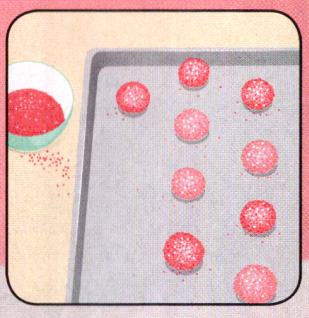
1. Cream the butter and sugar together in a large mixing bowl. Add the egg, and beat again.



2. Add the baking soda, baking powder, and vanilla, and stir until combined. Then stir in the flour, a little at a time, until the cookie dough is smooth.



3. Mix in food coloring (a few drops at a time) until the dough is dark pink. Use clean hands to knead the food coloring into the dough. (You may want to wear disposable food-safe gloves.) Shape the dough into a ball, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour.



4. Shape the dough into 1-inch balls, and roll in pink sugar. Place the dough balls 2 inches apart on a parchment-lined cookie sheet.



5. Ask an adult to bake the cookies in a preheated 350-degree oven for 7–9 minutes. Have the adult remove the cookies from the oven, and immediately press a chocolate candy in the center of each cookie. Let cool completely.



Photos: Radlund Photography Illustrations: Monika Roe Styling: Tricia Doherty

Locker Looks

Shine at school with these cool locker crafts!

By Tricia Doherty



Fluffy Rug

Bring luxury to your locker with a richly colored rug! Cut a piece of **grip drawer liner** to the size of your locker shelf or floor. Using the liner as a pattern, cut a same-sized piece of **fun fur** or **fleece.** Attach the liner to the back of the rug with **double-stick tape.** If needed, stick **adhesive magnetic strips** to the rug bottom to hold it in place. Add color to the walls with mini **magnetic decorations.**



Hot Dots

Jot down your thoughts on colorful dots! Use magnetic dots to write down dates for tests, practices, rehearsals, and other timely topics. To make a dot, cover a colorful piece of paper or fabric with clear contact paper. Attach the back of the paper to an adhesive magnetic sheet. Then trace a circle on the contact sheet with a dry-erase marker, using a bowl as a pattern. Cut out the dot, and stick it on the back of your locker or the locker door.

Mini Mailbox

Catch cards, notes, and other fun messages in a locker mailbox. To make one, you'll need an empty soap box. Snip a small section off both sides and the back. Cut a rounded front if you like. Cover the box with washi tape. Write "Mail" with a puffy-paint pen, attach adhesive magnetic strips to the back, and position the box under the air vents in your locker. Drop in notes from the outside slots to make sure they land in the box. Create boxes for your buddies, too!

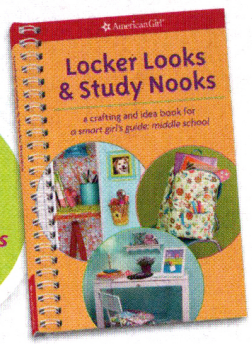


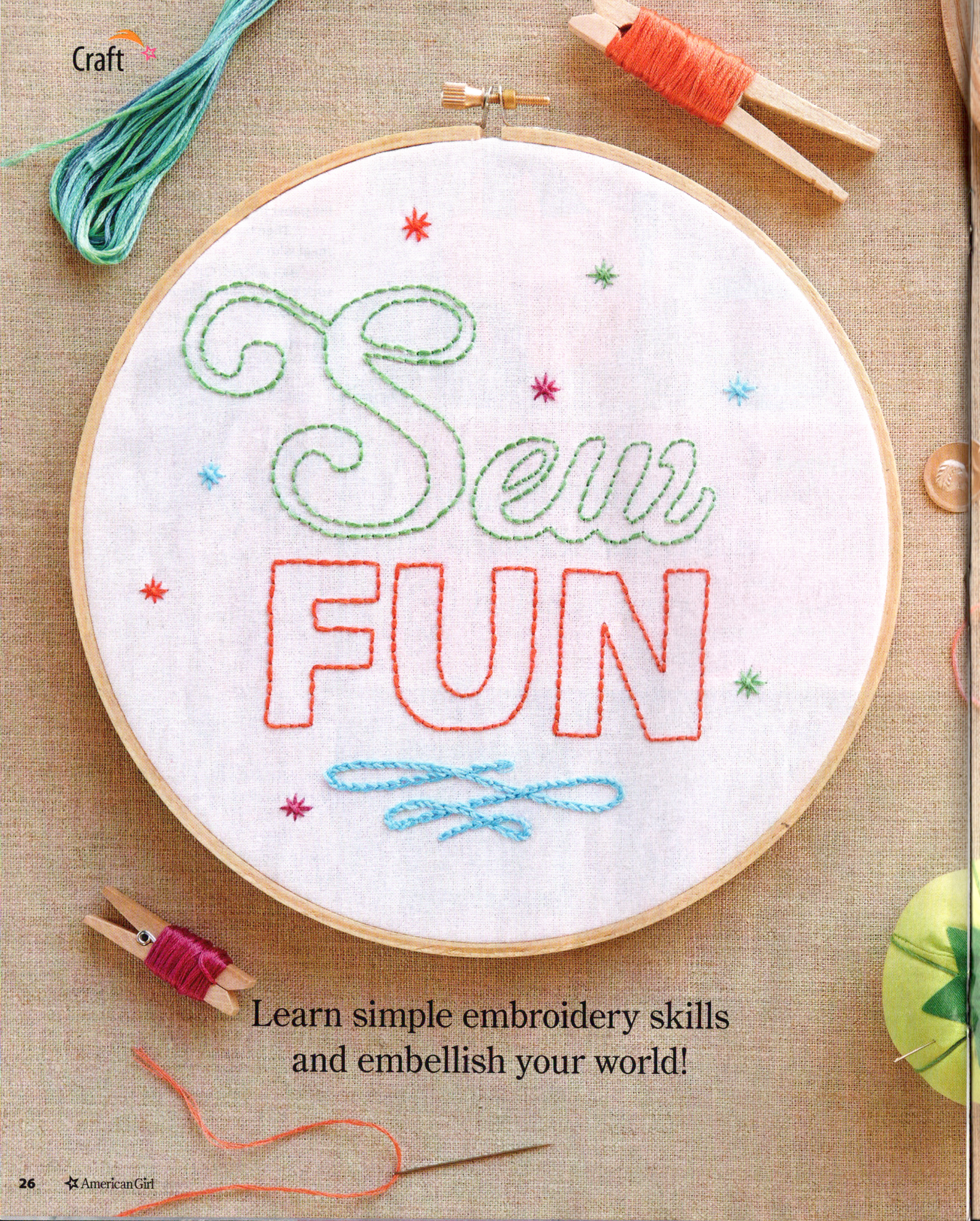


Glitter Gallery

Pals, pets, and other pictures will shine in these sparkling frames. Cover an adhesive magnetic sheet with washi tape. Place double-stick tape on the back of a picture, and center the pic on your sheet. Use a ruler to measure a frame 1 or 2 inches wider than your picture, and cut it out. Decorate the frame with sparkly tape or stickers.

More crafts can be found in the book *Locker Looks & Study Nooks.*





Learn simple embroidery skills and embellish your world!

You Will Need:

Embroidery Hoop
A plastic or wooden hoop that is 6 to 8 inches in diameter.

Fabric
A sturdy fabric that a needle can pass through. Try felt, woven cotton, or burlap.

A needle threader can also be a helpful tool.



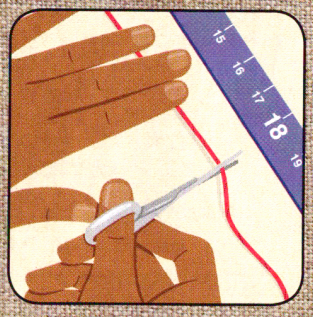
Needle
A sewing needle with a large enough eye to thread the floss.

Floss
Cotton embroidery floss.

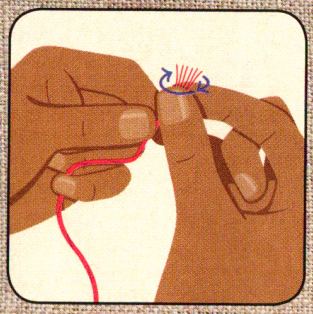
Scissors
The smaller the better.

Photos: Radlund Photography Illustrations: Monika Roe

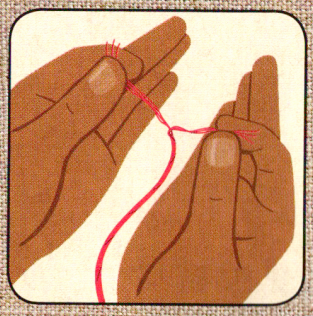
Thread Trick



1. Cut an 18-inch piece of embroidery floss (longer pieces tangle easily). The floss will have 6 strands. For most projects, you'll want floss pieces that are 3 strands thick.



2. To separate the strands, pinch the floss 1 inch from the end and gently roll the floss between your other thumb and forefinger until the strands start to separate.

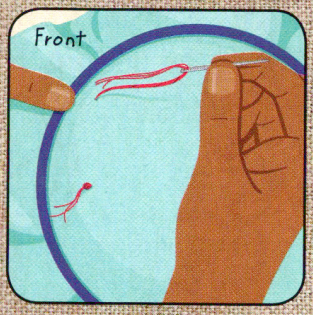


3. Divide the floss in half, and very slowly pull the two sections apart. You'll have two 3-strand sections and be ready to sew.

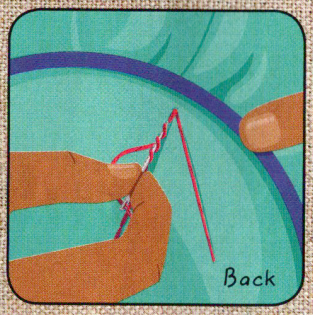
Starting and Stopping



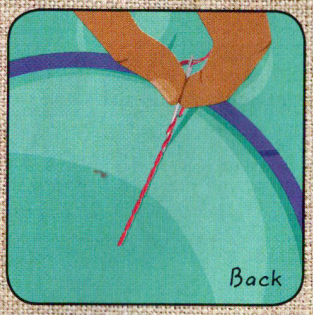
1. Start a stitch with a 3-strand piece of floss. Thread an end through a sewing needle, and tie a knot at the opposite end.



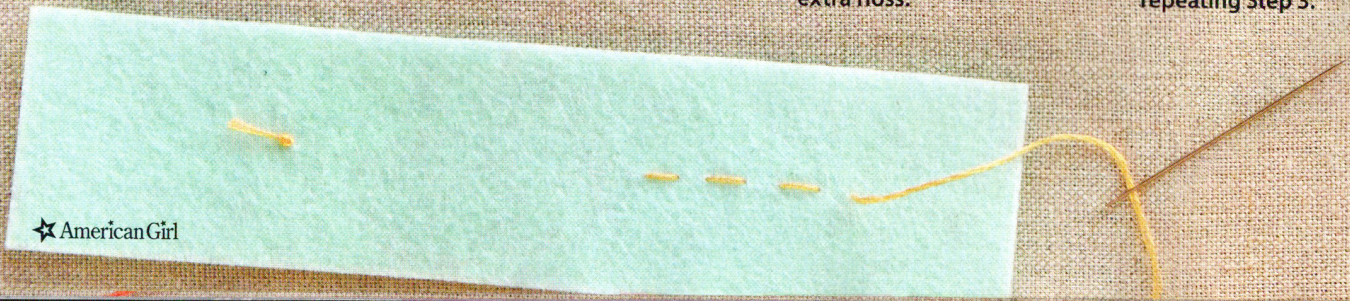
2. Pull the floss through the fabric about 5 inches away from where you actually want to sew. Sew your stitches.



3. End with the floss on the back of the fabric. Use the needle to thread it through the underside of a few stitches. Trim the extra floss.

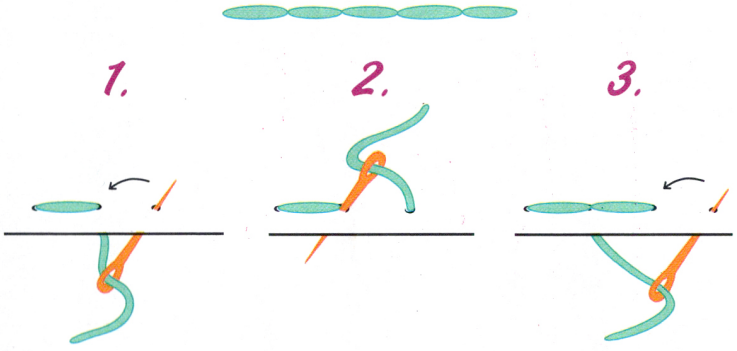


4. Cut off the first knot you made, and pull the floss to the back of the fabric. Thread the floss on a needle and finish by repeating Step 3.

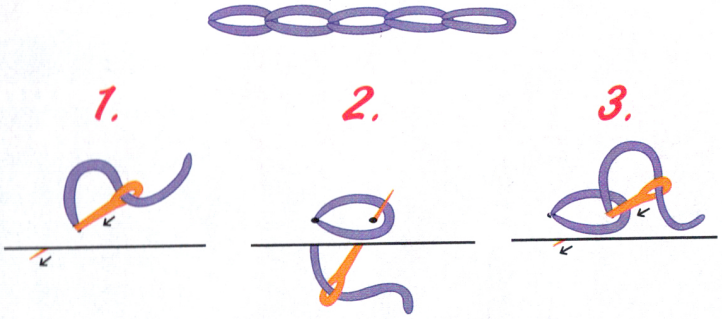


Stitch Dictionary

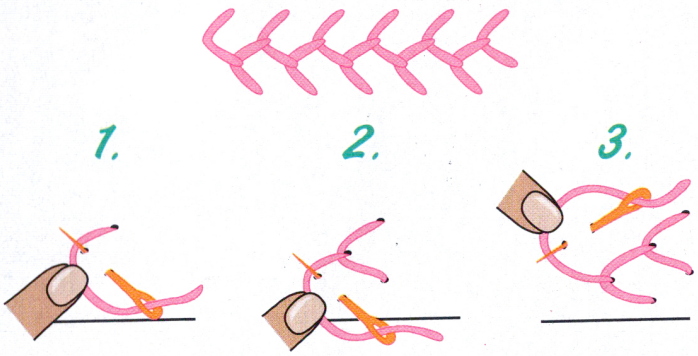
Backstitch



Chain Stitch



Feather Stitch



Sweet Sampler

Practice makes . . . art! Start with fabric that's a couple inches larger than your hoop. Lay the fabric over the inner ring, and place the outer ring on top. Press the two rings together. Stretch the fabric tight while tightening the screw. Then sew rows of stitches. (The name for this type of project is a "sampler.") When you're finished, trim the extra fabric close to the hoop. Hang one—or a whole collection—on a wall.

Ready, set, sew! Visit **americangirl.com/playmagazine** to watch embroidery videos that will teach you these stitches and more.


Cute Cuff
Make stitched jewelry. Cut a felt rectangle that's 1 inch wide and long enough to wrap around your wrist. Sew rows of stitches on the felt rectangle. Attach the bracelet around your wrist with a hook-and-loop fastener.
Custom Clothes
Sew designs on a jacket! Stitch the collar, pockets, or cuffs. (Be sure an adult washes embroidered clothing separately on a gentle cycle.)

Embroidered Embellishments

No pattern? No problem! Use printed fabric, and stitch around shapes or fill them in. Make sure to embroider the fabric first; then turn it into one of the following projects.

Frame Up

An embroidery hoop is a ready-made frame. When you've finished stitching, leave the fabric in the embroidery hoop. Then use scissors to trim the extra fabric close to the hoop. Ask an adult to help you hang the hoop on a wall.

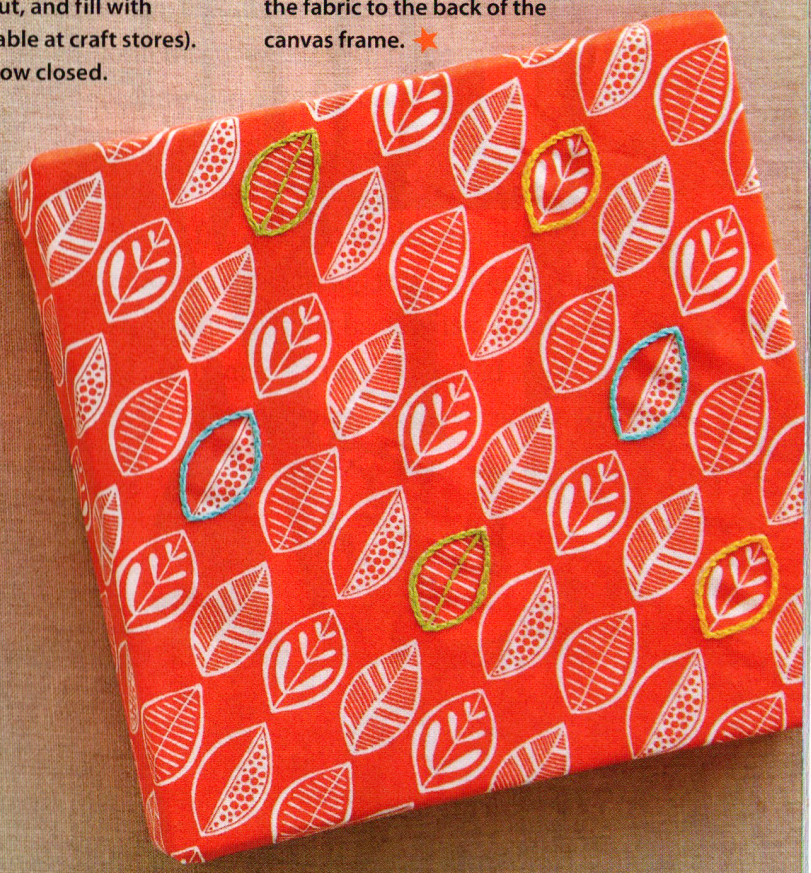
Personalized Pillow

Add awesome accents to a pillow made by you! Embroider designs on a bandana. Then fold the bandana in half, right-side facing in. Sew along 3½ sides. Turn the bandana right-side out, and fill with pillow stuffing (available at craft stores). Finish sewing the pillow closed.

Canvas Wrap

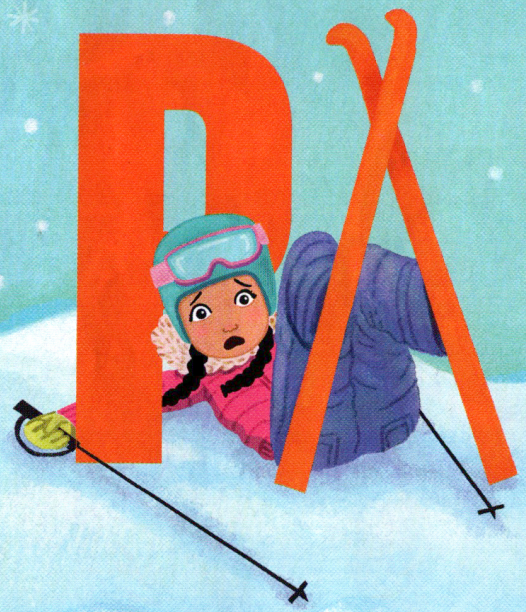
Here's an easy way to display your handiwork. Stretch embroidered fabric over a canvas. Ask an adult to use thumbtacks or staples to attach the fabric to the back of the canvas frame. ★







The Great Pine Peak PANIC



by Kathy Passero

Everyone is super excited for the sixth-grade trip. Everyone except Bree.

The whole school was buzzing about the upcoming sixth-grade trip: two nights and three days in February at a winter camp called Pine Peak.

Kids texted each other every morning: "Only fourteen days 'til Pine Peak!"

They shouted excitedly in the recess yard: "Only nine days 'til Pine Peak!"

The countdown had started. And everyone was ecstatic.

Everyone except me.

"I'll hate it," I told my parents. "I'll get homesick. I'll be a klutz at winter sports, and everyone will laugh at me. I'll get stuck in a cabin with the soccer team girls or the drama club girls, and no one will talk to me."

"You might be pleasantly surprised, Bree," said Mom. "The only way to find out is to try."

"It's good to get outside your comfort zone," Dad added. "It's what growing up is all about."

I didn't say so, but that was a big part of the problem. I go to an all-girls school in Manhattan where lots of my classmates want to be more grown-up. Sixth-graders wear their Pine Peak sweatshirts like badges of honor to show they've officially become big kids. But I'm not into makeup or fashion. I don't want to be a big kid any more than I want to spend two nights in a drafty, spider-infested cabin and two days making a fool of myself wiping out on cross-country skis.

Unfortunately, I seem to be the only sixth-grader who feels this way. Even my two best friends, Becca and Devon, talk about Pine Peak constantly.

Is something wrong with them . . . or me?

Becca lives on another floor of my apartment building and Devon lives on the same block, so we walk to school together every day. Today Becca and Devon spent the entire walk discussing whether to wear ski pants or sweatpants on the bus to Pine Peak. I thought wistfully back to last year, when we talked about interesting stuff. We told ghost stories and debated whether the new movie adaptations



Illustrations: Jennifer Kalis

of our favorite book series were better than the original books. We played Two Truths and a Lie. We speculated on whether Fab Vesti, one of the cool drama club girls with purple streaks in her hair, had given herself that nickname because it was short for Fabulous. And we tried to figure out whether our science teacher was kidding when he told us he based our experiments on secret ones he used to do for the government. I loved trying to imagine mild-mannered Mr. Potschky as a spy.

"BREE?!" Becca stared at me expectantly.

I shook myself out of my daydream. "What?"

"How can you be so calm?" Devon demanded. "The trip is in FIVE DAYS!"

I forced a smile. "Yeah, can't wait," I mumbled. Did my enthusiasm sound as fake to them as it did to me?

The closer the departure date crept, the more I panicked. And though the hours at school dragged while I sat listening to my classmates whisper excitedly about the thing I dreaded most, the days sped up as if they were in fast motion. Suddenly, time ran out.

My suitcase was packed. My alarm clock was set for a ridiculously early hour the next morning. At dinner, I almost cried in my spaghetti.

"Not hungry?" asked Mom, watching me twirl noodles morosely around my fork.

"I don't feel so good."

"You're nervous," she assured me. "That's completely normal."

"Maybe I should stay home."

"You know, Bree, you might enjoy this trip if you'd only give it a chance," Dad added.

Easy for him to say. He didn't have to spend the next two days frozen and homesick. Besides, Mom and Dad are all the things I'm not: outgoing, outdoorsy, and adventuresome.

I went to bed hoping for a blizzard, but the alarm bleeped at dawn and no one called to say the trip had been cancelled. I got dressed numbly, forced down a piece of toast, and dragged my duffel bag to the hall to wait for Becca and Devon. When they knocked, I hugged my parents good-bye and followed my friends reluctantly out into the cold, gray morning. They chattered nonstop while I trudged along wishing I were home in bed.

We were among the first to arrive at school, so we huddled together sipping paper cups of hot chocolate the teachers handed out, while the steps filled with bundled-up kids and overstuffed backpacks. Mr. Potschky hopped around wearing a fuzzy hat with earflaps, checking students' names off his list.

Finally, we jostled our way aboard, and the buses rumbled out of the city and into the countryside. Blocks lined with buildings gave way to snow-covered fields and farms. Gradually the snow deepened, and the scenery changed to thick glades of pines, ice lacing their branches like strands of diamonds.

I was just drifting off when Mr. Potschky stood up, still wearing his flappy hat. "OK, ladies! Listen for your cabin group. When we arrive, take your bags to your assigned cabin. Meet me in the lodge for lunch in fifteen minutes."

As he read through the groups, I grimaced. The teachers had put me in a cabin with girls I hardly knew. Two were soccer players. One was Fab Vesti. I stared out the window, trying not to cry. The buses were winding up a narrow road that led to a large wooden lodge surrounded by a cluster of cabins. If I hadn't been so miserable, it would have looked pretty—a gingerbread village with icing piped along the window ledges and sugar sprinkled over the roofs.

There was a rush for the door and lots of shouting, laughter, and confusion as everybody scram-



bled to grab their bags. I hung back, avoiding the fray, so by the time I reached my cabin the other girls were already there.

"Anybody mind if I take a top bunk?" asked Ingrid Bowman, one of the soccer players, surveying the room with its red-checked curtains and pine furnishings.

"Go for it," said her teammate Charlotte Lewis, tossing her duffel bag on a lower bunk.

Fab Vesti put her suitcase on another bottom bunk, and Carla McDonald, a girl I recognized as a library volunteer, heaved her bag on the bed above it.

I glanced at Marisol Sanchez, the last member of our cabin. She was standing in the middle of the room clutching her backpack to her chest. "Which bunk do you want?" I asked. She gave a small shrug.

"Fine. I'll take this one." I tossed my bag on the bottom bed.

Like my cabin, my assigned table for meals was full of kids I hardly knew. The teachers had obviously made a point of separating friends. I spotted Becca across the room, at table 12. Devon, two tables behind me, caught my eye and waved.

I expected to eat lunch in silence, but Pine Peak had assigned a counselor to each table to make sure we "got to know each other better," as Jenny, the bubbly college student at our table, explained. "Let's start by sharing one fear we have about the next two days and one hope," she suggested. No way, I thought. If these girls hear my fears, they'll laugh for sure. Fortunately, Jenny started at the other end of the table.

"I'm afraid I'll be homesick."

"I hope I don't stink at every outdoor activity."

"I'm afraid I'll be in groups without anyone I know."



Wait! I wasn't the only one?! I was just beginning to relax when Mr. Potschky called out, "OK, Piners! Time to get your winter gear from your cabins. Meet back here for your outdoor group assignments at one o'clock!"

A half hour later, I was back in the lodge, sweating through my parka and wondering queasily why I'd wolfed down so much lunch. My group's leader, a burly red-bearded guy named Dave, took us down the hill to a stone hut, its walls lined with cross-country skis, boots, and poles. He helped us find equipment, then led us outdoors.

"Once you've got your skis on, follow me to the fence," called Dave, cutting a neat trail through the snowy field in front of us. Several of my classmates glided off gracefully in his wake, leaving the rest of us behind.

Tentatively, I slid one foot forward. *Shwwwsssh.* I was still standing. I pushed the other foot through the snow. *Shwwwsssh* again. Taking stiff little strides, I made it almost halfway down the field. Then I hit a patch of ice.

"AAAAAGGGH!" I spun my arms like windmills, lost my balance, and plowed headfirst into a drift. Something cold and crunchy slid down my collar.

"ERRRRRGGGH!" Behind me, somebody started laughing. My face burning from the cold and embarrassment, I looked over my shoulder to see who was making fun of me.

To my surprise, I saw Fab Vesti sprawled out in the same awkward position I was. She wasn't laughing at me. She was laughing at herself. "I figured I'd be bad at this, but I'm worse than I expected!" she said through a mouthful of snow.

Suddenly, I started laughing too. After being so scared of falling, it was a relief not to dread it anymore.

The rest of our group had reached the fence, and I could see Dave motioning to us eagerly. Fab and I got to our feet and headed clumsily toward them, but a few seconds later my skis flew out from under me and I ended up in the splits. Then Fab toppled over backward and landed with her skis in the air. By the time we reached the group, they were all laughing at us. We were snow-covered and a little bruised, but we were laughing harder than any of them.

"Congratulations," said Dave, grinning. "You two have demonstrated the first lesson of cross-country skiing: How to fall and get back up."

All through the lesson, Fab and I kept giggling, especially when one of us fell. Just when I was getting the hang of the kick-and-glide, the lesson ended. After thawing out in the hut, we walked back to the main lodge. Fab fell into step with me and kept up a stream of cheerful conversation. It was the most we had ever talked. I was amazed at how down-to-earth and funny she was.

The rest of the afternoon was easy compared to skiing. We learned wilderness survival skills, built snow forts, and played blob tag. Being a slow runner, I was one of the first to get tagged and absorbed into the "blob" of kids trying to catch the rest of the group, but nobody seemed to notice.

I was ravenous by dinnertime and grateful to slip into my sleeping bag that night. But the girls in my cabin started discussing whether Mr. Potschky was really a former spy, so I had to join in. Then we debated whether the movie versions of what turned out to be everyone's favorite book series were better than the books. Next, Carla McDonald told ghost stories. She knew some great ones I'd never heard. We even played Two Truths and a Lie.
I found out that Fab's nickname came from her baby sister, who couldn't pronounce her real name, which was Fabrianna. I felt guilty remembering how my friends and I had accused her of calling herself Fab for Fabulous. I'd have to tell them the real

story—and how nice she was when you got to know her. I was so happy to be talking about interesting stuff again that I forgot to feel homesick. I even forgot to check under the bed for spiders!

The next thing I knew, it was morning. Marisol Sanchez and I were assigned to breakfast setup, so we had to get to the lodge early. To my surprise, I noticed her eyes looked red-rimmed and puffy when we left the cabin. Had she been crying? She hadn't said much last night. I'd assumed she was asleep, but now I wondered. Had she felt homesick? Left out? Should I ask? I didn't want to embarrass her. Still . . .

"Um, did your outdoor group ski yesterday?" I asked tentatively.

"No," she said softly. "Today."

"Have you ever skied?"

She shook her head.

"Nervous?"

"Dreading it," she whispered. "And half the soccer team is in my group, so they'll probably all be really good at it."

"Well, you can't be any worse at it than I was." I launched into a description of my spectacular wipeouts. By the time we reached the lodge, Marisol was laughing. She gave me a shy smile before heading off to her table.

After breakfast, Dave led our group to an old-fashioned sled drawn by Clydesdales for what he promised would be the highlight of our visit. A horse-drawn sleigh? Even I had to admit, that was pretty charming. I was starting to think maybe Pine Peak wasn't so bad . . . then we emerged from the woods.

Ahead of us stood a wooden platform supporting what looked like an old-fashioned clothesline with wires stretching down the hillside to another platform far below.

"Presenting our newest activity—the zipline!" Dave announced. "Who wants to go first?"

"ME! ME!" A chorus of excited shouts erupted around me. Dave surveyed the eager daredevils jostling for position and caught sight of me cowering at the back of the crowd. "How about you, Bree?"

My tongue froze to the roof of my mouth. Why couldn't I speak? Someone nudged me, and I stumbled up the steps. Dave and another counselor jabbered instructions as they strapped me into a harness and clamped a big metal clip to my waist, but I couldn't hear anything they said over the sound of my own deafening heartbeat. In the distance, smoke curled from the chimney of the lodge. Far below, near the ski hut, a cluster of small figures was scrambling and falling in the snow. I thought briefly of Marisol and hoped she felt less stressed than I did right now.

What if the harness broke? What if I got stuck up there? What if I got so terrified I peed in my snow pants and everyone saw?

Dave said something and flashed a thumbs-up symbol. Then he patted me on the back. The next thing I knew, my feet left the ground. The platform

fell away, and I was flying. My nose tingled, breathing in the icy air. A rushing sound like a river filled my ears. Snowy rocks darted in and out of view on the ground below. Pines whizzed past, fragrant and almost close enough to touch. Golden beams of sunlight filtered between their trunks like spotlights, illuminating falling snowflakes. I stretched out a hand to catch one.

It was beautiful.

And then it was over. Too soon I reached the lower platform, where a grinning counselor unhooked me and asked if I'd enjoyed my ride. Dazed, I nodded and stared back up the hill. On the platform above, kids were waving and shouting. I waved back and hurried to rejoin my group.

A few girls were hanging back, looking doubtful.

"I'm not gonna do it," said one.

"Me neither," another agreed. "I'll hate it."

"You should try it!" I blurted out. "You might enjoy it if you give it a chance!"

Wait . . . had I actually said that?

I was still elated from my zipline adventure that evening when we gathered around the fireplace in the lodge for a sing-along and s'mores. Maybe it was because we were all exhausted and it felt so good to be back indoors where it was warm, but I couldn't help noticing that my classmates seemed to be sprawled out in random groups. Marisol and Charlotte, the soccer team captain, who had apparently become buddies while cross-country skiing, came over to join Fab and me. Carla, Becca, and the girls from their table plopped down on my other side. Their hair was messy, their faces wind-burned. Some had chocolate smeared on their chins. But no one seemed self-conscious. It felt cozy.

That's when a pang of homesickness hit me. I'd been so busy I hadn't even thought about Mom and Dad. Suddenly my eyes started to sting. Just then Devon sat down next to Becca. "Ya know," she said. "I had doubts, but this was FUN!"

"Doubts?!" I asked, astonished. "You've been talking about this nonstop for a month!"

"I was trying to psych myself up," she explained.

"Me too!" exclaimed Charlotte, leaning over Marisol. "I almost stayed home."

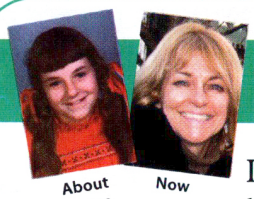
"Really?" asked Marisol. "I thought I was the only one!"

On the bus ride home, Becca and Devon and I sat with Fab and Marisol and talked over the seatbacks with Charlotte and her soccer friends. Snuggled in my new Pine Peak sweatshirt, I gazed out the window as the forest turned to farms and then crowded city blocks, signaling that the trip was nearly over. Was I a big kid now? If so, was that OK?

Maybe the kind of growing up Mom and Dad were talking about had more to do with my outlook than my looks. My outlook sure had changed in the past 48 hours. I'd realized I was more outdoorsy and outgoing than I'd guessed. And my classmates and I were more alike than I would have believed. We all worried about fitting in and failing when we tried new things. Sometimes you've got to fall on your face in the snow together to discover how much you've got in common. ★



Meet the Author



Kathy Passero

I grew up in Michigan and learned to ski when I was in middle school. I spent lots of time facedown in snow banks at first, but I ended up having fun and conquering my fear of trying new things.

This or That?

Snow Day Edition

Would you rather...

bake a cake that looks like an igloo **OR** cookies that look like icicles?

ride on a sparkly snowplow **OR** drive a pink ice resurfacer?

swim in a bathtub filled with snowballs **OR** go sledding on a giant ice cream cone?

have a hula hoop contest in the snow **OR** play hockey with an ice cube?

dress up like a snow queen **OR** wear cozy pajamas?

mush a team of sled dogs **OR** mush a team of sled kittens?

wear five mittens at the same time **OR** a coat with four zippers?

make snowballs out of ice cream **OR** cookie dough?

drink hot cocoa that tastes like mayonnaise **OR** hot cider that smells like pickles?

make a huge snow fort with your siblings **OR** a tiny snowman with your best friend?

have it snow sprinkles **OR** rain chocolate sauce?

wear a snowflake bracelet **OR** a snowman necklace?

dance in snowshoes **OR** run a marathon in ice skates?

teach your dog to fetch snowballs **OR** catch snowflakes on his tongue? ★

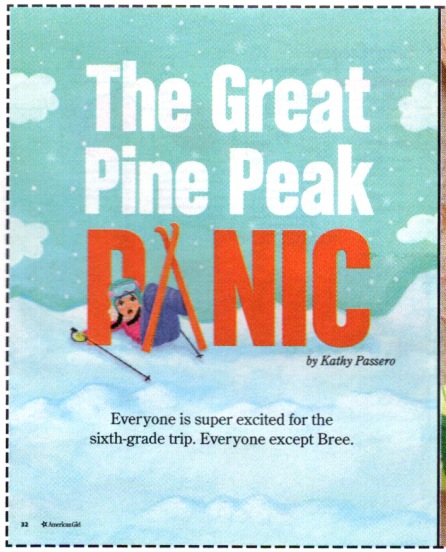
Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi

Illustrations: Monika Roe



A





B





C





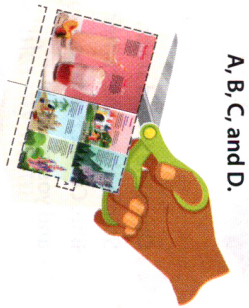
D



Mini Mag

With the Mini Mag, you can make a miniature copy of *American Girl* for your doll or stuffed animal. All you need are scissors and a stapler. Read the directions all the way through before you begin.

1. Cut out each pair of pages only on the dotted lines. Be sure to cut around the tabs marked with the letters A, B, C, and D.



2. Stack the pages on top of one another in the order shown below, with the letters on the tabs facing up.



Continued

Mini Mag

3. Fold the stack of pages in half along the solid line in the center. The cover of the magazine should now be on top. Run your fingernail down the folded edge to help the pages lie flat.

4. Open the folded stack. Staple along the center line. Cut off the tabs, and you're done!



Photo: Sabina Gibson

Poster: Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your poster.

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HELP!



Dear *American Girl,*

A boy in my class makes annoying noises with his mouth. When I ask him to stop, he says he's not doing anything! I can't concentrate!

Frustrated

It could be that this boy is bothering you on purpose. It also could be that he really doesn't realize how loud he is. Work hard to screen out the distraction. Ignoring the problem might be easier than you think, and it's a good trick to know, since distractions are everywhere. But if you still have trouble, talk to your teacher about changing seats.

Dear *American Girl,*

I am so busy all the time. My problem is that whenever I get free time, I feel like I waste it.

A Girl

When you're busy all the time, it can feel strange to not be busy. You've got so many things to remember, and taking time off can make you feel uneasy—as if you're forgetting something! But resting your brain is important. Free time recharges you for your busy days. So go read. Talk to friends. Play with a pet or sibling. If you are taking a break from the busy-ness and doing something you truly enjoy, that's never a waste.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

Parties always seem so fun. But I'm afraid that if I have one, people won't have a good time.

Party person?

It's great that you want your guests to have fun, but it's really important that you enjoy yourself at your own party, too. If you're nervous, how about starting small? You could have a little party with three other girls you know well. Plan lots of easy activities such as watching a movie, playing a game, or doing a craft, and let your guests pick what to do. Get some good snacks, have fun, and try not to stress out!

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My skin is very dry. I use different lotions like my mom tells me, but nothing is working!

Dry as an alligator

First, make sure you're using a lotion that is more about healing your skin than smelling good. (The ones that smell pretty aren't always the best ones for specific skin problems.) Use the lotion morning and night, especially when you're fresh out of the shower. And speaking of the shower, turn down the temperature—hot water can really dry your skin. If the problem continues, mention it to your doctor.

★

Posters Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your posters.

MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

In group projects at school, I am kind of a control freak. I always end up as the group leader, and I like to add ideas and things to other people's parts. It's like it's in my nature to be bossy.

I don't want to lose friends

Having strong opinions is not a bad thing. You're confident enough to lead a project and creative enough to try to make it great. Those are AMAZING leadership qualities, and they can take you far in school and in life. The trick to being a good leader is to take charge of a project while treating the people in your group kindly, taking their ideas as seriously as your own, and sharing the project's success. Listen hard—instead of just waiting to talk—and help people do their fair share in a way that lets them shine. That might mean letting go of some of your own ideas, which is hard but important. Your friends and classmates now (and the people who will work for you later when you actually ARE the boss) will respect you in return.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I LOVE chocolate. We have lots of leftover chocolate from the holidays, and I always, always sneak some. I'm not unhealthy, but I want to stop eating it.

Sugar!

Prepare small packages of healthy munchies (grapes or pretzels or whatever you like) and keep them at eye level in the pantry or fridge. If healthier snacks are as fast and easy as chocolate, making better choices will be easier. Also, ask your family to help keep less candy around so that you're not as tempted.



★

Dear *American Girl,*

A girl from my group of friends hasn't been hanging out with us anymore. Ever since she left, our whole circle has been shaky. Friends are always fighting or talking behind someone's back. We don't have fun anymore, but I don't want to lose my friends.

Unsteady Friendship

Things can fall apart quickly when a friend group loses its glue. It's normal for friendships to change over time, but seeing your group fall apart is hard. It might help if you all got together to talk. Each of you could say one thing you miss most about the friend who left. Make a list of those things—keep it positive! Then each of you can say one nice thing about each girl still in the group. List all of those things, and you'll see that you all have plenty of glue left to help the friendship stick.

★

even MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl*,

My brother told me who he has a crush on but that I can't tell anybody. But I HAVE to tell someone! A person, too—not just my journal.

oh brother

It's good that you haven't spilled your brother's secret. Unless a secret is about someone being hurt or in danger, you can't share it. That's the rule of secrets. Your brother's trust is important, and you'd lose that if you told. Ask him if you could talk about it with a parent, or see if he wants to talk more about it with you—that might help. Remember: If you are someone people can trust, that's something to be proud of. It might be hard, but it's worth it.

★

Dear *American Girl*,

My friend has a mean attitude sometimes, and my mom says that I'm acting like her! That is not me at all—I am nice. How do I stop acting like my friend?

help

It's natural for close friends to start acting and sounding alike. That's great sometimes, but your new habits are getting you into trouble. To start fixing this, pay attention to how you talk to your mom. Slowing down your words and keeping things calm can help you sound more like yourself. Then imagine this: Keep your kindness on your tongue, like a candy. That might help you say more good things than mean things and help you to start acting like your nice old self.



★

Dear *American Girl*,

I have a friend who is really smart, but lately I've noticed she is struggling with her schoolwork. She told me she is sad because her parents are always working. How can I help her?

friend struggles

You can support your friend, but you can't solve this problem for her. Encourage her to talk to an adult she trusts, at school or church or in her life. Offer to go with her if she wants. Stick by her side, and don't discuss this problem with other friends. If things stay bad and your friend hasn't talked to anyone for help, it's OK for you to ask a trusted adult for advice on what to do. Good luck.

★

Advice from You

"When you have a problem you just can't face alone, try talking to your parents. It may seem awkward at first, but talking to someone older and wiser really can help."

Ellie I.
Age 11, Ohio

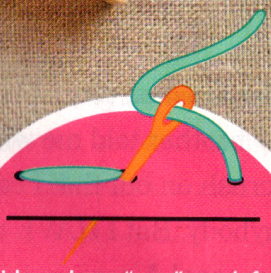
Need advice? Got advice? Write:
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Here's another planet design by Ellie G., age 10, of Nebraska that is out of this world!

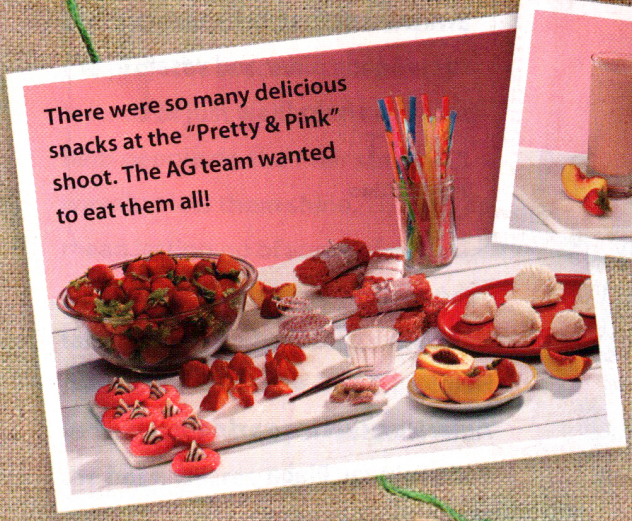




Did you have "sew" much fun with our embroidery crafts? Check out the "Here's How" video at americangirl.com/playmagazine

Behind the Scenes

This issue was packed with snow, smiles, and scrumptious treats.

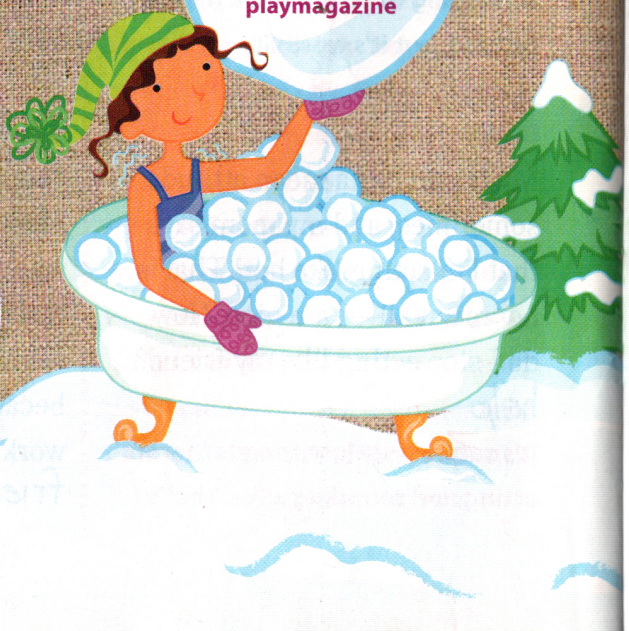


There were so many delicious snacks at the "Pretty & Pink" shoot. The AG team wanted to eat them all!



In one shot, the Fuchsia Float bubbled over the top of the glass!

For bonus "This or That" questions, visit americangirl.com/playmagazine



Photos: Radlund Photography

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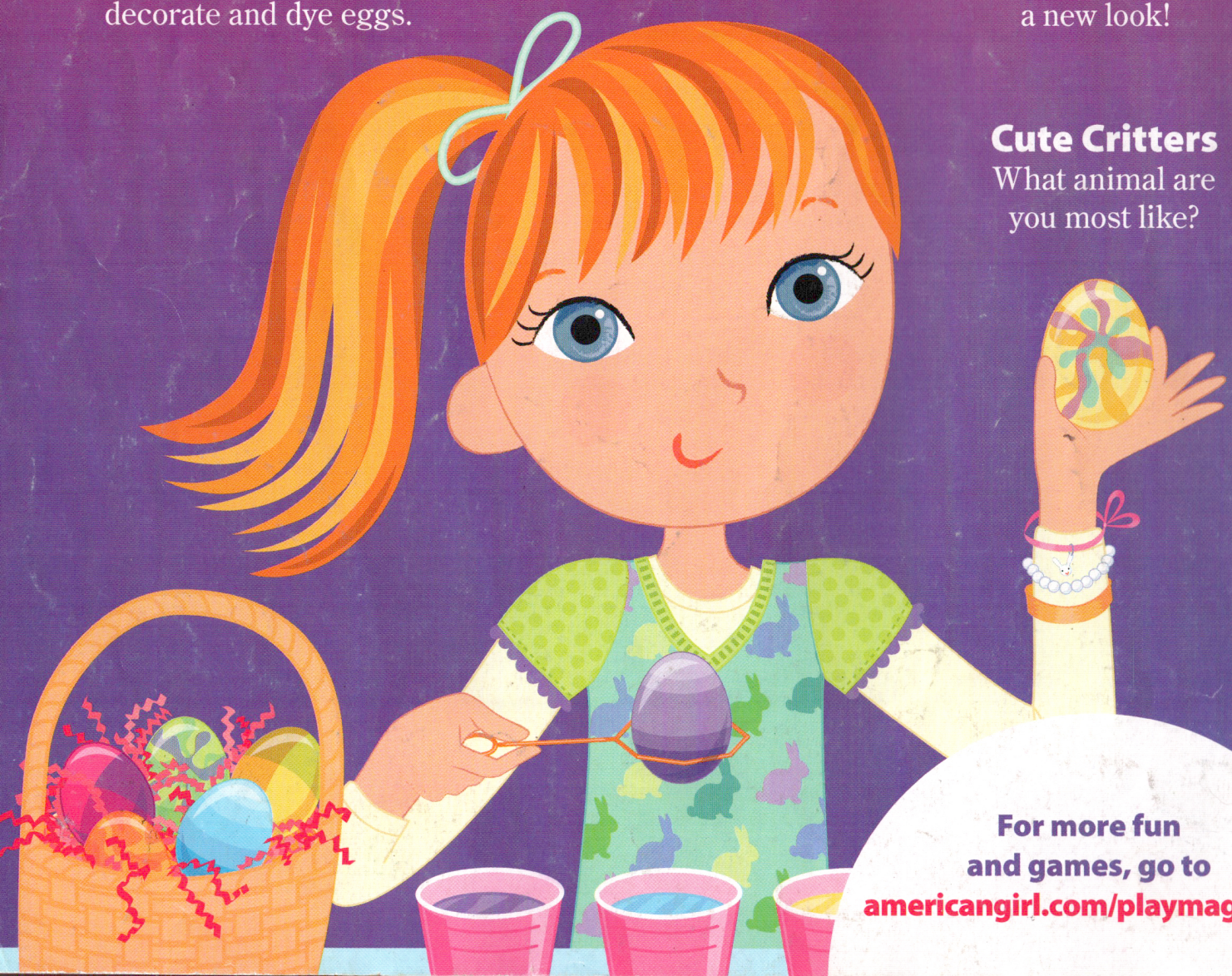
Coming up in the March/April issue of *American Girl* magazine

Extraordinary Eggs
Learn new ways to decorate and dye eggs.

Dealing with Drama
You'll love these tips about how to handle drama.

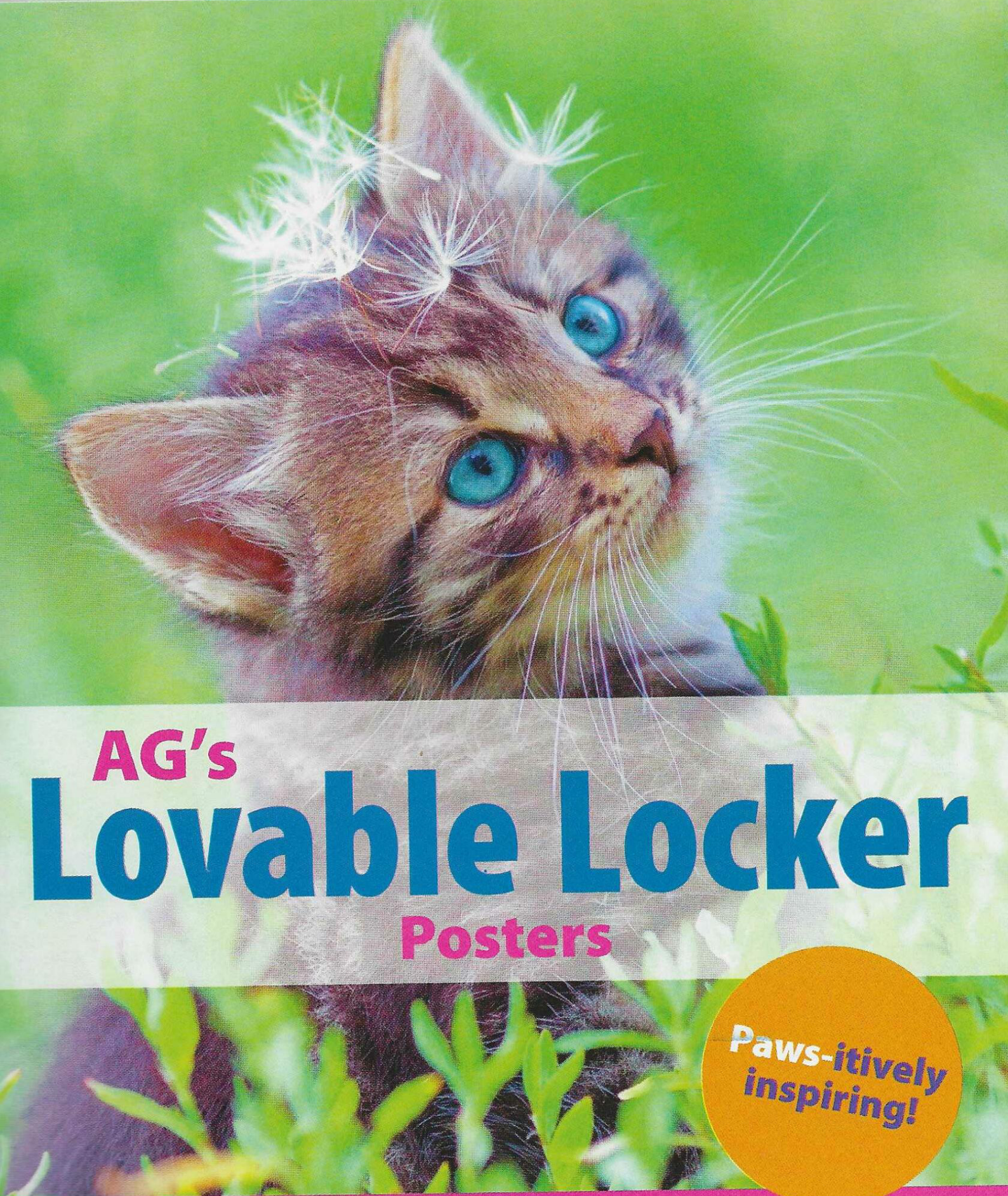
Sweet Spaces
Give your room a new look!

Cute Critters
What animal are you most like?



For more fun and games, go to americangirl.com/playmagazine

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AG's Lovable Locker Posters

Paws-itively inspiring!

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True friends

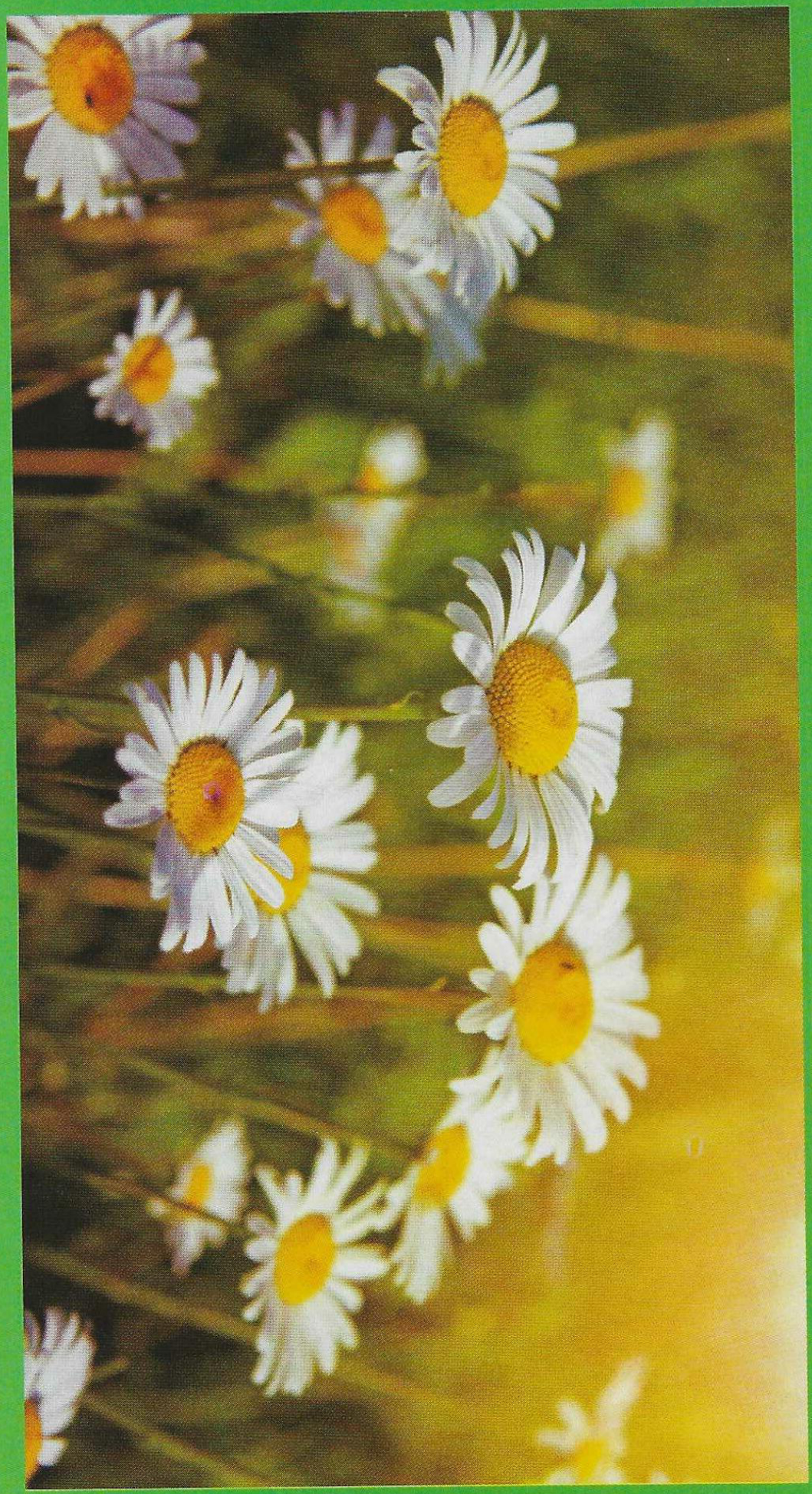
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Stand tall



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Have an adventure

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